

Smoke-Free Workplace Fact Sheet, 2004

Why Go Smoke-Free?	Why Help your Employees Quit?
<p><i>Lost Productivity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smoking-related illness led to about \$81.9 billion in productivity losses from 1995-1999 in the U.S.¹ A smoking employee costs the employer at least \$1,000 more than a nonsmoking employee every year in absenteeism, reduced productivity, and higher health, fire, and life insurance.² <p><i>Absenteeism</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 19% of all absenteeism in the workplace is due to smoking-related illnesses; amounting to over 80 million absences per year in the U.S.³ During a one-year period of exposure to secondhand smoke, non-smoking employees are more likely than unexposed employees to take time off sick and require treatment for respiratory problems.⁴ <p><i>Costs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance claims average \$300 per year more for smokers than nonsmokers.⁵ Accidents resulting from smoking can cost employers \$45 per person per year due to injury and workers' compensation costs.⁵ <p><i>Benefits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banning smoking in the workplace can reduce health and fire insurance premiums by over 25% and decrease disability and early retirement payments by 75%.⁵ Ventilation costs for indoor smoking areas can be eliminated when adopting a smoke-free workplace.⁵ Businesses that ban smoking report reduced office cleaning costs, and equipment such as computers lasts as much as 60% longer.³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former smokers have low rates of absenteeism.⁶ Smokers have twice the accident rate of nonsmokers possibly due to lack of attention span, irritation of the eyes and throat causing coughing and watery eyes; and higher carbon monoxide levels lowering oxygen saturation, which may contribute to decreased alertness and reflex speed.⁷ Exposure to secondhand smoke contributes to unemployment, disability, and worker's compensation for illness and loss of work.⁸
	<p style="text-align: center;">Health Effects of Smoking in the Workplace</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toxins in tobacco smoke kill over 440,000 people per year in the United States.⁸ It is estimated that exposure to secondhand smoke in nonsmokers accounts for as many as 62,000 deaths per year from coronary heart disease.⁹ Secondhand smoke exposure causes over 3,000 lung cancer deaths annually, as well as exacerbation of lung disease in nonsmoking adults and respiratory problems in children.⁸ Smoking in the workplace can result in a combined damaging effect when smokers are also exposed to workplace chemicals and other toxic agents.⁷
	<p style="text-align: center;">Workplace Smoking Policies</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 71% of Kentuckians report that smoking is banned inside their workplace. Of those who said workplace smoking was permitted, 59% reported that indoor workplace smoking areas were enclosed and ventilated.¹⁰ Requiring all workplaces to be smoke free would reduce employee smoking by 10%.¹¹ If all workplaces in the United States implemented smoke-free policies, about 178,000 smokers would stop smoking and while those who continued to smoke would consume 10 billion fewer cigarettes per year.¹²

Sources

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